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28289 7590 01/27/2010 THE WEBB LAW FIRM, P.C. 700 KOPPERS BUILDING 436 SEVENTH AVENUE PITTSBURGH, PA 15219				
EXAMINER				
BASS, DIRK R				
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

**Attachment**

In response to applicant's argument that the references of Hicke and Gregory cannot be combined, the examiner directs applicant's attention to the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of claim 1. The examiner modifies the method of Hicke by incorporating a capillary pore membrane having only endogenous carboxyl groups (taught by Gregor). The combination of the modification of carboxyl groups taught by Hicke and the endogenous carboxyl groups taught by Gregor would have been obvious to one skilled in the art in order to provide functional ligands which can covalently attach desired affinity groups for affinity based separations.

Furthermore, in response to applicant's argument that Gregor teaches binding sites over the entire membrane, the examiner directs applicant's attention to claim 1. Claim 1 does not preclude the binding of groups from anywhere on a capillary-pore membrane. The language of claim 1 requires only that at least one compound be linked to a membrane via an endogenous carboxyl group within a transmembrane passageway. By teaching binding throughout the capillary pore membrane, Gregor implicitly discloses that such binding occurs within the pores of said membrane.

/Krishnan S Menon/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1797